

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for procuring a manufacturer for a project request comprising the steps of:

submitting a specialized project request for a buyer to at least one manufacturer broker;

receiving a plurality of feasibility responses for manufacture of said project request from a plurality of prospective manufacturers via said at least one manufacturer broker; and

responding to said plurality of feasibility responses by selecting a manufacturer from among said plurality of prospective manufacturers, such that said buyer procures said manufacturer from among said plurality of prospective manufacturers utilizing a single project request.

2. The method for procuring a manufacturer according to claim 1, said step of submitting a specialized project request further comprising the step of:

submitting said specialized project request from a client communicatively connected through a network to a broker server system.

3. The method for procuring a manufacturer according to claim 1, said step of submitting a specialized project request further comprising the step of:

selecting a plurality of categories of manufacturers to invite bids from for said project request.

4. The method for procuring a manufacturer according to claim 1, said step of submitting a specialized project request further comprising the step of:

providing a project specification file storage location.

1 5. The method for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 1, said step of submitting a specialized project request further  
3 comprising the step of:  
4 indicating a level of security for said specialized project  
5 request.

1 6. The method for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 1, said step of receiving a plurality of feasibility responses  
3 for said project request further comprising the step of:  
4 receiving a bid to manufacture said project request from a  
5 selection of said plurality of prospective manufacturers.

1 7. The method for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 1, said step of receiving a plurality of feasibility responses  
3 for said project request further comprising the step of:  
4 receiving a suggestion for adjusting said project request to  
5 increase manufacturing feasibility.

1 8. The method for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 1, said step of receiving a plurality of feasibility responses  
3 for said project request further comprising the step of:  
4 receiving a project request cancellation due to lack of  
5 manufacturing feasibility.

1 9. The method for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 1, said method further comprising the step of:  
3 submitting an adjusted project request in response to said  
4 plurality of feasibility responses.

1 10. The method for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 1, said step of responding to said plurality of feasibility  
3 responses by selecting a manufacturer further comprising the  
4 steps of:

5 selecting a preferred manufacturer; and

6 selecting at least one alternative manufacturer.

1 11. The method for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 1, said step of responding to said plurality of feasibility  
3 responses by selecting a manufacturer further comprising the step  
4 of:

5 selecting said manufacturer according to at least one rating  
6 for said manufacturer.

1 12. A system for procuring a manufacturer for a project request  
2 comprising:

3 a client computer system communicatively connected to a  
4 network;

5 means for submitting a specialized project request for a  
6 buyer from said client computer system to at least one  
7 manufacturer broker via said network;

8 means for receiving a plurality of feasibility responses as  
9 compiled by said at least one manufacturer broker for manufacture  
10 of said project request from a plurality of prospective  
11 manufacturers via said network; and

12 means for responding to said plurality of feasibility  
13 responses by selecting a manufacturer from among said plurality  
14 of prospective manufacturers.

1 13. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim

2 12, said means for submitting a specialized project request

3 further comprising:

4 means for selecting at said client computer system a

5 plurality of categories of manufacturers to invite bids from for

6 said project request.

1 14. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim

2 12, said means for submitting a specialized project request

3 further comprising:

4 means for providing a project specification file storage

5 location.

1 15. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim

2 12, said means for submitting a specialized project request

3 further comprising:

4 means for indicating a level of security for said

5 specialized project request.

1 16. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 12, said means for receiving a plurality of feasibility responses  
3 for said project request further comprising:

4 means for receiving a bid to manufacture said project  
5 request from a selection of said plurality of prospective  
6 manufacturers.

1 17. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 12, said means for receiving a plurality of feasibility responses  
3 for said project request further comprising:

4 means for receiving a suggestion for adjusting said project  
5 request to increase manufacturing feasibility.

1 18. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 12, said means for receiving a plurality of feasibility responses  
3 for said project request further comprising:

4 means for receiving a project request cancellation due to  
5 lack of manufacturing feasibility.

1 19. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 12, said system further comprising:

3 means for submitting an adjusted project request from said  
4 client system via said network in response to said plurality of  
5 feasibility responses.

1 20. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 12, said means for responding to said plurality of feasibility  
3 responses by selecting a manufacturer further comprising:

4 means for selecting a preferred manufacturer; and

5 means for selecting at least one alternative manufacturer.

1 21. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 12, said means for responding to said plurality of feasibility  
3 responses by selecting a manufacturer further comprising:

4 means for selecting said manufacturer according to at least  
5 one rating for said manufacturer.



1 22. A program for procuring a manufacturer, residing on a  
2 computer usable medium having computer readable program code  
3 means, said program comprising:

4 means for transmitting a specialized project request for a  
5 buyer to at least one manufacturer broker;

6 means for receiving a plurality of feasibility responses for  
7 manufacture of said project request from a plurality of  
8 prospective manufacturers via said at least one manufacturer  
9 broker; and

10 means for enabling a response to said plurality of  
11 feasibility responses by selecting a manufacturer from among said  
12 plurality of prospective manufacturers, such that said buyer  
13 procures said manufacturer from among said plurality of  
14 prospective manufacturers utilizing a single project request.

1 23. The program for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 22, said means for transmitting a specialized project request  
3 further comprising:

4 means for transmitting said specialized project request from  
5 a client communicatively connected through a network to a broker  
6 server system.

1 24. The program for procuring a manufacturer according to claim

2 22, said means for transmitting a specialized project request

3 further comprising:

4 means for transmitting a selection of a plurality of  
5 categories of manufacturers to invite bids from for said project  
6 request.

1 25. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim

2 22, said means for transmitting a specialized project request

3 further comprising:

4 means for transmitting a project specification file storage  
5 location.

1 26. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim

2 22, said means for transmitting a specialized project request

3 further comprising:

4 means for transmitting an indication of a level of security  
5 for said specialized project request.

1 27. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 22, said means for receiving a plurality of feasibility responses  
3 for said project request further comprising:

4 means for receiving a bid to manufacture said project  
5 request from a selection of said plurality of prospective  
6 manufacturers.

1 28. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 22, said means for receiving a plurality of feasibility responses  
3 for said project request further comprising:

4 means for receiving a suggestion for adjusting said project  
5 request to increase manufacturing feasibility.

1 29. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 22, said means for receiving a plurality of feasibility responses  
3 for said project request further comprising:

4 means for receiving a project request cancellation due to  
5 lack of manufacturing feasibility.

1 30. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 22, said system further comprising:

3 means for transmitting an adjusted project request in  
4 response to said plurality of feasibility responses.

1 31. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 22, said means for enabling a response to said plurality of  
3 feasibility responses by selecting a manufacturer further  
4 comprising:

5 means for selecting a preferred manufacturer; and

6 means for selecting at least one alternative manufacturer.

1 32. The system for procuring a manufacturer according to claim  
2 22, said means for enabling a response to said plurality of  
3 feasibility responses by selecting a manufacturer further  
4 comprising:

5 means for selecting said manufacturer according to at least  
6 one rating for said manufacturer.

1 33. A method for brokering project requests among a plurality of  
2 available manufacturers, said method comprising the steps of:

3 receiving a project request from a buyer;

4 distributing said project request according to type of  
5 manufacture to a selection of prospective manufacturers from  
6 among a plurality of available manufacturers; and

7 in response to receiving feasibility responses from said  
8 selection of prospective manufacturers, facilitating feasibility  
9 of manufacture of said project request according to said  
10 plurality of feasibility responses, such that said project  
11 request is brokered for said buyer to facilitate obtaining a  
12 manufacturer for said project request.

13 34. The method for brokering project requests among a plurality  
14 of available manufacturers according to claim 33, said method  
15 further comprising the step of:

16 receiving said project request at and distributing said  
17 project request from a broker server communicatively connected  
18 through a network to a plurality of client systems and a  
19 plurality of manufacturer systems.

1 35. The method for brokering project requests according to claim  
2 33, said method further comprising the steps of:

3 comparing said project request with a plurality of current  
4 project requests;

5 notifying said buyer if said project request matches one of  
6 said plurality of current project requests; and

7 in response to receiving a buyer request for said one of  
8 said plurality of current project requests, facilitating said  
9 buyer in placing a specified order for said one of said plurality  
10 of current project requests.

11 36. The method for brokering project requests according to claim  
12 33, said method further comprising the step of:

13 transferring said plurality of feasibility responses  
14 received from said selection of prospective manufacturers to said  
15 buyer.

distributing said customer interest responses with said project request to said selection of prospective manufacturers in order to provide said selection of prospective manufacturers with an indication of customer interest.

1 38. The method for brokering project requests according to claim  
2 33, said step of facilitating feasibility of manufacture of said  
3 project request further comprises the steps of:

4 in response to receiving request adjustment suggestions from  
5 said selection of prospective manufacturers, compiling a  
6 suggested project request;

7 transferring said suggested project request to said buyer;  
8 and

9 in response to receiving an adjusted project request from  
10 said buyer, transmitting said adjusted project request to said  
11 selection of prospective manufacturers.

12 39. The method for brokering project requests according to claim  
13 33, said step of facilitating feasibility of manufacture of said  
14 project request further comprising the steps of:

15 in response to receiving responses indicating said project  
16 request lacks feasibility, adjusting said project request;

17 polling said selection of prospective manufacturers with  
18 said adjusted project request; and

19 transferring said feasibility responses received from said  
20 selection of prospective manufacturers for said adjusted project  
request to said buyer.



1 40. The method for brokering project requests according to claim  
2 33, said method further comprising the step of:  
3 controlling access of said plurality of available  
4 manufacturers to said plurality of feasibility responses.

1 41. The method for brokering project requests according to claim  
2 33, said method further comprising the step of:  
3 distributing said project request to specific manufacturers  
4 designated by said buyer with said project request.

1 42. The method for brokering project requests according to claim  
2 33, said method further comprising the step of:  
3 transferring said project request and said preferred  
4 manufacturer to an order procurement system.

1 43. A system for brokering project requests among a plurality of  
2 available manufacturers, said system comprising:

3 a broker server system communicatively connected to a  
4 network;

5 means for receiving a project request at said broker server  
6 system from a buyer;

7 means for distributing said project request via said network  
8 according to type of manufacture to a selection of prospective  
9 manufacturers from among a plurality of available manufacturers;  
10 and

11 means for facilitating feasibility of manufacture of said  
12 project request according to said plurality of feasibility  
13 responses, in response to receiving feasibility responses at said  
14 broker system from said selection of prospective manufacturers.

1 44. The system for brokering project requests according to claim  
2 43, said system further comprising:

3 means for comparing said project request with a plurality of  
4 current project requests;

5 means for notifying said buyer if said project request  
6 matches one of said plurality of current project requests; and

7 means for facilitating said buyer in placing a specified  
8 order for said one of said plurality of current project requests,  
9 in response to receiving a buyer request for said one of said  
10 plurality of current project requests.

1 45. The system for brokering project requests according to claim  
2 43, said system further comprising:

3 means for transferring said plurality of feasibility  
4 responses received from said selection of prospective  
5 manufacturers to said buyer.

means for distributing said customer interest responses with said project request to said selection of prospective manufacturers in order to provide said selection of prospective manufacturers with an indication of customer interest.

1 47. The system for brokering project requests according to claim  
2 43, said means for facilitating feasibility of manufacture of  
3 said project request further comprises:

4 means for compiling a suggested project request, in response  
5 to receiving request adjustment suggestions from said selection  
6 of prospective manufacturers;

7 means for transferring said suggested project request to  
8 said buyer; and

9 means for transmitting said adjusted project request to said  
10 selection of prospective manufacturers, in response to receiving  
11 an adjusted project request from said buyer.

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1 48. The system for brokering project requests according to claim  
2 43, said means for facilitating feasibility of manufacture of  
3 said project request further comprising:

4 means for adjusting said project request, in response to  
5 receiving responses indicating said project request lacks  
6 feasibility;

7 means for polling said selection of prospective  
8 manufacturers with said adjusted project request; and

9 means for transferring said feasibility responses received  
10 from said selection of prospective manufacturers for said  
11 adjusted project request to said buyer.

1 49. The system for brokering project requests according to claim  
2 43, said system further comprising:

3 means for controlling access of said plurality of available  
4 manufacturers to said plurality of feasibility responses.

1 50. The system for brokering project requests according to claim  
2 43, said system further comprising:

3 means for distributing said project request to specific  
4 manufacturers designated by said buyer with said project request.

1 51. The system for brokering project requests according to claim  
2 43, said system further comprising:

3 means for transferring said project request and said  
4 preferred manufacturer to an order procurement system.

1 52. A program for brokering project requests among a plurality  
2 of available manufacturers, residing on a computer usable medium  
3 having computer readable program code means, said program  
4 comprising:

5 means for receiving a project request from a buyer;  
6 means for transmitting said project request according to  
7 type of manufacture to a selection of prospective manufacturers  
8 from among a plurality of available manufacturers; and  
9 means for facilitating feasibility of manufacture of said  
10 project request according to said plurality of feasibility  
11 responses, in response to receiving feasibility responses from  
12 said selection of prospective manufacturers.

1 53. The program for brokering project requests among a plurality  
2 of available manufacturers according to claim 52, said program  
3 further comprising:

4 means for receiving said project request at and distributing  
5 said project request from a broker server communicatively  
6 connected through a network to a plurality of client systems and  
7 a plurality of manufacturer systems.

1 54. The program for brokering project requests according to  
2 claim 52, said program further comprising:

3 means for comparing said project request with a plurality of  
4 current project requests;

5 means for transmitting a notification to said buyer if said  
6 project request matches one of said plurality of current project  
7 requests; and

8 means for facilitating said buyer in placing a specified  
9 order for said one of said plurality of current project requests,  
10 in response to receiving a buyer request for said one of said  
11 plurality of current project requests.



1 55. The program for brokering project requests according to  
2 claim 52, said program further comprising:

3 means for transferring said plurality of feasibility  
4 responses received from said selection of prospective  
5 manufacturers to said buyer.

1 56. The program for brokering project requests according to  
2 claim 52, said means for facilitating feasibility of manufacture  
3 of said project request further comprises:

4 means for distributing said project request to a plurality  
5 of potential customers;

6 means for receiving customer interest responses from said  
7 plurality of potential customers; and

8 means for distributing said customer interest responses with  
9 said project request to said selection of prospective

10 manufacturers in order to provide said selection of prospective

11 manufacturers with an indication of customer interest.

1 57. The program for brokering project requests according to  
2 claim 52, said means for facilitating feasibility of manufacture  
3 of said project request further comprising:

4 means for compiling a suggested project request, in response  
5 to receiving request adjustment suggestions from said selection  
6 of prospective manufacturers;

7 means for transferring said suggested project request to  
8 said buyer; and

9 means for transmitting said adjusted project request to said  
10 selection of prospective manufacturers, in response to receiving  
11 an adjusted project request from said buyer.

1 58. The program for brokering project requests according to  
2 claim 52, said means for facilitating feasibility of manufacture  
3 of said project request further comprising:

4 means for adjusting said project request, in response to  
5 receiving responses indicating said project request lacks  
6 feasibility;

7 means for polling said selection of prospective  
8 manufacturers with said adjusted project request; and

9 means for transferring said feasibility responses received  
10 from said selection of prospective manufacturers for said  
11 adjusted project request to said buyer.

1 59. The program for brokering project requests according to  
2 claim 52, said program further comprising:

3 means for controlling access of said plurality of available  
4 manufacturers to said plurality of feasibility responses.

1 60. The program for brokering project requests according to  
2 claim 52, said program further comprising:

3 means for distributing said project request to specific  
4 manufacturers designated by said buyer with said project request.

1     61.   The program for brokering project requests according to  
2     claim 52, said program further comprising:  
3           means for transferring said project request and said  
4     preferred manufacturer to an order procurement system.

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